NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
BACKGROUNDER NO. 1-0236
VAN SEROPIAN

FEBRUARY 25, 1976

FOCUS: WILLIAM SCRANTON

INTRO:

PRESIDENT FORD HAS NAMED WILLIAM SCRANTON, FORMER GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO REPLACE DANIEL MOYNIHAN AS CHIEF DELEGATE TO THE UNITED NATIONS. VOA'S VAN SEROPIAN HAS THIS FOCUS ON MISTER SCRANTON:

VOICE:

MISTER SCRANTON, WHO MADE AN UNSUCCESSFUL BID TO WIN THE REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION IN 1964, HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS A MODERATE IN FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES. HE HAS LONG HAD AN INTEREST IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND HAS ESPOUSED HIS VIEWS FRANKLY.

PRESIDENT FORD HAS VOWED THAT MR. MOYNIHAN'S SUCCESSOR AT THE UNITED NATIONS WOULD, IN THE PRESIDENT'S WORDS, "FOLLOW THE SAME POLICY OF CHALLENGING SOME OF THE THIRD OR FOURTH WORLD POWERS, CALLING A SPADE A SPADE." MISTER FORD ADDED: "OBVIOUSLY THERE AREN'T MANY PAT MOYNIHANS WHEN IT COMES TO FLAIR AND FLAMBOYANCE, BUT THE BASIC POLICY WILL BE IDENTICAL."

WILLIAM SCRANTON IS ANYTHING BUT FLAMBOYANT. HE IS NOT A MAN TO PUSH HIMSELF TO THE FORE. HIS STYLE IS STRICTLY LOW-KEY. HE HAS DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS A LIBERAL ON CIVIL RIGHTS, A CONSERVATIVE ON FISCAL AFFAIRS, AND AN INTERNATIONALIST ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

IN 1968, THE THEN PRESIDENT-ELECT RICHARD NIXON SENT HIM ON A FACT-FINDING TOUR OF SIX MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES. AFTER THAT TRIP HE TOLD NEWSMEN: "AMERICA WOULD DO WELL TO HAVE A MORE EVEN-HANDED POLICY. WE ARE INTERESTED,

VERY INTERESTED, HE SAID, IN ISRAEL AND ITS SECURITY AND WE SHOULD BE. BUT IT IS IMPORTANT, SAID MISTER SCRANTON, TO POINT OUT TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND TO PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD THAT WE ARE INTERESTED IN OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE AREA AND HAVE FRIENDS AMONG THEM."

THE STATEMENT WAS REGARDED AS CONTROVERSIAL AT THE TIME BECAUSE IT APPEARED TO RAISE THE POSSIBILITY--AT LEAST AMONG ISRAELI OFFICIALS--THAT MISTER NIXON MIGHT BE PREPARED TO REDUCE THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL. SUBSEQUENTLY MISTER NIXON, NOT YET IN THE WHITE HOUSE, DISASSOCIATED HIMSELF FROM THE SCRANTON COMMENT.

AT THE AGE OF 58, MISTER SCRANTON STILL LOOKS YOUTHFUL. HE HAS INTELLIGENCE, READY CHARM, BUSINESS SUCCESS AND BOUNDLESS ENERGY. ALTHOUGH HE RAN RELUCTANTLY FOR GOVERNOR OF HIS STATE, HE CAMPAIGNED TIRELESSLY. HE TRAVELED THOUSANDS OF MILES FOR SEVEN LONG MONTHS, SHAKING EVERY HAND HE COULD FIND. HE SERVED AS GOVERNOR FROM 1963 TO 1967.

HIS GREAT-GRANFATHER, JOSEPH, AND TWO COUSINS STARTED THE SCRANTON FAMILY FORTUNE BACK IN THE 1840'S...IN IRON-WORKS, RAILROADS, THE SCRANTON GAS AND WATER COMPANY AND A NEWSPAPER. MR. SCRANTON WENT TO THE FASHIONABLE HOTCHKISS SCHOOL IN CONNECTICUT AND YALE UNIVERSITY, WHERE HE TOOK A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN 1939. HE THEN ENTERED THE YALE LAW SCHOOL FROM WHICH HE RECEIVED A DEGREE AFTER INTERRUPTING HIS STUDIES TO SERVE AS AN OFFICER IN THE ARMY AIR CORPS DURING WORLD WAR TWO.

IN MISTER SCRANTON'S UNDERGRADUATE DAYS HIS FRIENDS INCLUDED A HARVARD MAN WHO LATER BECAME PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, JOHN F. KENNEDY. LIKE THE LATE PRESIDENT, HE

HAS AN AMIABLE MANNER, A QUICK SMILE, AND A WRY SENSE OF HUMOR. BUT BENEATH IT ALL IS AN AIR OF CONFIDENCE, AND, ON OCCASION, HE CAN EVEN BE STEELY.

IN 1966 MISTER SCRANTON SAID HE WOULD NEVER AGAIN RUN FOR ANY PUBLIC OFFICE. ALMOST NO ONE BELIEVED HIM, BUT HE STUCK BY HIS RESOLVE. NOW HE RETURNS TO PUBLIC LIFE IN A POSITION WELL-SUITED TO HIS ABIDING INTEREST IN CURRENT EVENTS, FOREIGN POLICY AND HISTORY.

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